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BRIEFING PAPER FOR THE PRESIDENT'S PRESS CONFERENCE

November 20, 1962

SUBJECT: US policy on removal of IL-28s from Cuba.

QUESTION: Is it still the position of the United States that the IL-28 Soviet bombers must be removed from Cuba and that some type of verification within Cuba must take place before the US will give an assurance against the invasion of Cuba? How long are we prepared to wait for Soviet compliance with its commitment regarding Cuba?

CURRENT SITUATION REPORT:

In the agreement of October 27-28, Premier Khrushchev agreed to remove all weapons systems in Cuba capable of offensive use, under effective United Nations observation and supervision. In addition, he undertook to halt the further introduction of such weapons systems into Cuba. For our part, you agreed -- "Upon the establishment of adequate arrangements through the United Nations to insure the carrying out and continuation of these commitments" -- (a) to remove the quarantine measures now in effect and (b) to give assurances against an invasion of Cuba.

The press has generally interpreted compliance with the agreement thus far to mean that, since the Soviets have not yet removed the IL-28s as they have the 42 missiles, the United States will continue withholding assurances against an invasion of Cuba. The press further has said that the US will lift the quarantine when the IL-28s are removed but that it will not give assurances against an invasion of Cuba until there are "better means" of verification of offensive weapons' dismantlement than are now available through aerial reconnaissance and safeguards are provided against their reintroduction.

SUGGESTED POINTS IN REPLY

The United States adheres firmly to its part of the October 27-28 agreement, but only must the Soviet bombers be removed from Cuban soil but satisfactory means of verifying their removal, along with adequate safeguards against the reintroduction of any type of offensive weapon system, are indispensable preconditions to the carrying out fully of our side of the bargain.

As to the length of time we are prepared to wait for Soviet fulfillment of their commitments, I can only say that we have been reasonable and patient over the past four weeks, and I do not think this matter can or should drag on much longer.

ARA/P:JPKing:tab 11/19/62

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